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Focus

The new House of Laity which has just come into existence began on a very distasteful note. All our readers may not be aware of the case of the lady who wished to stand for election as a representative of the diocese of London. She was sent a proposal form without any details as to how and when the election was to be conducted, and as a result sent in her nomination form too late. So far we have just a display of clerical incompetence. But this lady then proceeded to complain of this inefficiency, and was interviewed by a clergyman who asked her who she thought she was to be standing for election. She quite rightly responded by asking him who *he* was to question her qualifications in a matter which only affected the laity. So far, clerical incompetence and Clerical impudence. (This can be matched by the clergyman in another part of the country who had the nerve to send out a circular suggesting that it was not a good thing to send out election addresses.)

But the most disquieting thing is the atmosphere that followed. She was told that she could appeal but it was made known to her that "it would not do her any good" among the right people if she protested, that there would have to be another election for the whole diocese and that would cost money and upset a lot of people: in other words, it would be so much easier for everybody concerned if she would drop the whole matter.

It is about time that people realised that elections to the Church Assembly are vital, and not cosy little affairs to be organised on the Old Boy net. It is also about time that the clergy realised that the laity are quite capable of managing their own affairs and that members of the House of Laity are the most important members of the Church and not just pawns in a clerical game.

It is also worth stating that although I understand that the Diocese of London is overhauling its procedure with a view to seeing that nothing like this happens again, and that although once the mistakes had been made all the officials concerned behaved with propriety and courtesy it is important that justice should not only be done but also be seen to be done.

The atmosphere in the Assembly as a whole was however encouraging. There were some new faces: there were some young faces. Admittedly the New Boys went through the initiation cere-

monies. The usual charades were acted out between His Grace of Canterbury and Mr. Ivor Bulmer-Thomas. (Query: Does the Archbishop encourage Mr. Bulmer-Thomas? There is no surer way of getting the sympathy of the Assembly on the side of the Archbishop.) The authorities played their usual game of informing members that there were going to be plenty of opportunities to discuss 50 per cent of the measures later, and that there had been plenty of time to discuss the other 50 per cent in the past.

But the Assembly basically did a good job. Proposals to increase pensions (to *persuade* the clergy to retire as the Bishop of Exeter cynically pointed out), to make it easier to close redundant churches, to build a new large graduate theological college were speeded on their way.

A motion on World Hunger calling on the government to take various steps including setting aside 1 per cent of the national income for the technical development of under-developed countries was passed, in spite of an exodus which included several diocesan Bishops and a most regrettable recourse to humour. If the Assembly is going to be funny, and God knows it needs some relief, it had best be funny about its own affairs, which *are* funny. One of the most disastrous things that could happen for the Christian Church in the under-developed countries would be for a tape-recording of one speech in this debate to be broadcast. But this whole motion, and the Bishop of Woolwich's appearance in the *Lady Chatterley* trial, are signs that the Church is looking outwards. This particular sign was not hastily obliterated by His Grace of Canterbury.

Who Will Speak For You

A Doctor

You don't get much warning when they want you to appear in Court, and the Welfare Officer's early morning phone call came in time to upset the egg-and-bacon stage of breakfast. Although not on trial myself, the message contracted my gut with anxiety. For in a way, by going to give psychiatric evidence on behalf of a patient, a young man of nineteen years, I was going to be on trial myself.

Already I had a fantasy of myself defying the Judge and being committed to prison for contempt of court. The evening paper headline formed up rapidly in my mind's eye—"Court scene, doctor clashes with judge". Then I noticed the unfinished egg and bacon and was soon on my way.

Emerging from the Underground south of the river, I turned to the road leading to the court buildings. I saw a short, quietly dressed man, carrying a bulging brief-case, asking someone the way. My assumption that it was a Probation Officer going to court was wrong. But the man was going to the court, he told me, to speak for his landlady's son who was in trouble. We got to the court and went up the steps into a large hall, where people were waiting. If you believe that we're all one class in England nowadays then the sight I saw would make you think again. For here seemed to be the representatives of what Prof. Titmus calls "the politically obscure minorities, the powerless groups, the dependent poor, the disabled, the deprived and the rejected". There were the tall, blonde working-class mothers, with their sons in the late teens. These were smart, flamboyant and cocky, in their narrow trousers and highly polished winkle-pickers. They seemed cheerful and brash and defiant. A court official shouted at one for leaning on a radiator cover. It was the sort of shout which shouldn't be shouted and the resentful piece of dirt moved himself away from the offending spot. There were hurried consultations in secretive groups, with solicitors and relatives.

There were small, anxious careworn men, drawing on their Weights, alone, ill at ease and ill-clothed.

Then the barristers started arriving fresh-faced and with springy strides. They carried their wigs and gowns in bags with elaborately worked initials on them. They were the sort of people I had known at school and at Oxford and whose feelings and assumptions I myself largely share. Yet here I felt as if I was in no man's land. I was one of the small group of people being ground between the world of the offenders and the world of authority, trying to interpret the one to the other and trying to make articulate the insights gained in the quiet privacy of my consulting room. For I know something of what lay behind the brash exterior of the young men, and something, too, of the compulsive desperation of the chronic offender. I was chilled inwardly when I looked at the list of cases to be heard and noted that during the afternoon the time of the court was allocated to "incorrigible rogues". I had almost forgotten that people still thought of other human beings in these terms and I tried to assess the report which I had in mind about my own patient and see how it would look through the eyes of those who lived in a world of top people, good chaps and incorrigible rogues.

It was late afternoon by the time the Welfare Officer and myself had finally pushed through the confusion and identified the counsel who was acting for our patient, and had found out in which court the case was to be heard. In the courtroom we heard the disposal of two cases, before our own was heard. Both were young men, standing in the dock, pale, drawn and inarticulate. In each case a long list of previous offences had been read out and they had already pleaded guilty to the latest one for which they were now on trial. The well of the court separated them from the judge, high and magnificent and benign. They had no words to bridge the gulf and said nothing for themselves when given the chance. Then in the silence the judge asked "Is there nobody to speak for you?" There was silence. Neither parent nor lawyer, Probation Officer nor friend appeared. Only the silence, which was broken as sentence was passed and they disappeared from our view. For my patient it was different. The diligent Welfare Officer had made sure that he had applied for legal aid and a pleasant woman barrister appeared. The Welfare Officer presented the court with a careful history of the patient's life which helped to put into perspective the list of previous offences. Finally I gave my evidence, explaining something

of the underlying difficulties and putting forward a rational plan of treatment. The judge made no sudden decision, but after listening to us agreed that further inquiries should be made to see if our plan was workable. Although we had written long and clear reports, it seemed important that we should appear in person and take our stand.

But the mild satisfaction of the still slightly uncertain result was disturbed again and again as I hurried back to the Underground station. In my mind, I heard the judge's voice, deep and challenging, saying "Who's going to speak for you?" and then the almost tangible silence which enveloped the sad, resentful, isolated young man who had stood waiting for sentence to be passed. Jammed in the hot, irritating intimacy of the rush-hour train, the words of Father Zossima about the souls of the dying, those who depart in solitude, unknown, sad and dejected, came into my mind "Lord have mercy on all who appear before thee today". Those young men who had appeared before the secular judge at the sessions also needed prayers, and yet I did not even remember their names. So I turned with relief to the comfort of a smoke and the stolen interest in the headlines of someone else's evening paper.

PRISM welcomes the conference of Anglican students to be held in London next month, full details of which you will find on the outside back cover. PRISM has always believed that the best road to ecumenicity is that which proceeds along the broad highways of our different communions. All Christian roads do not lead to Rome, but all Christian roads do lead to the true City of God. This conference is a worth while milestone in Anglican student work. Apart from this it ought even to be enjoyable. It need hardly be said that its orthodoxy is guaranteed by the presence of an ex-editor and the editor of PRISM, and one of our best columnists among the speakers.

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The New Knowledge

NEIL LEIGHTON

an Engineering Graduate now training for social work after some experience in the Probation Service, in an American school for Delinquents and in Youth Club work.

This title carries with it the intimations of some pearl lately revealed to the soul of man, but since it is one commonly used to refer to the "enlightened" approach to social casework, I felt it rightly conveyed the "mysterious" nature of the methods and challenges in which the social caseworker is involved. To many lay people it has seemed that the Probation Officer, to take one example, can do little other than look over his desk at the offender and in military tradition say, "Well, my lad, you had better pull up your socks and make sure you don't get mixed up in anything like this again." It may have been true of a few officers when the military was a main source of Probation Officers that they did little more than "give the offender another chance" and help him to get a job, and this was an effective and valuable service to perform.

As the understanding of the mind and behaviour improved, it became clear that whilst the "common sense" approach was very useful for the offender who had made one slip and was capable of responding to verbal encouragement and direction, these were only a very small proportion of all legal offenders. More commonly the offence committed was only one symptom of the general malaise within the client, one expression of a "delinquent attitude" or an emotional disturbance. In seeing everything in this new light there came a general reaction in the U.S. where most of the study was taking place; this took the form of hesitating to give the client any direction and becoming solely concerned with his feelings and attitudes; it was sometimes taken to extremes and led to certain pitfalls. One of these was pointed to by Nietzsche in his comment upon the beginnings of psychology . . . "Formerly man was given a 'free will' as his dowry from a higher order; today we have taken his will away altogether, in the sense that we no longer admit the will as a faculty. The old word 'will' now serves only to denote a resultant, a kind of individual reaction, which follows necessarily upon a number of partly contradictory, partly harmonious stimuli: the will no longer 'acts' or 'moves'." This is one of the more "philosophic" pitfalls but the practical pitfall is illustrated admirably by Jules Feiffer in one of his cartoons of the little boy who was accidentally

drafted into the Army. The little boy is confronted with a sergeant who has had some training in working with kids on the Lower East Side of New York and the sergeant said, "Well now what is your problem, sonny?" and the little boy replied, "It's all a terrible mistake, I shouldn't be here, I'm only four years old!" "Well now", said the sergeant, "and how do you feel about that?" Instead of dealing with the problem in hand and examining the reality of it the worker strains to read some deeper implication into it. This attitude becomes even more treacherous when translated out of the casework situation; after some bitter experiences of this, the Roman Catholic Chaplain in the Institution in which I worked in the States gave me some advice just before I left, "If ever you get into Administration or take any responsibility remember this, when someone comes to you and tells you that your house is on fire don't stand there and say to yourself, 'Now I wonder why he felt the need to come and tell me?' get moving and put the fire out!"

In the States recently there has been a reaction against the solely "passive" role in the casework situation and they are now talking of more "aggressive casework" which involves not only manipulation of external circumstances in favour of the client but sometimes deliberately provoking a crisis in which the client reveals the nature of his disturbance. In fact most workers realise that effective casework is a subtle blend of common sense and a form of down-to-earth psycho-therapy.

What is all this talk about therapy? Does it mean lying the patient on a couch and talking about his dreams? You cannot operate on him to change his attitudes, and if, as we have read in our everymans psychology and sociology, attitudes are culturally determined what is the point of talking about them with the client?

Martin Buber, the "religious" philosopher, writes that man is the creature of possibility who needs confirmation by others and by himself in order that he may become the particular man that he is, and Buber asserts that "Again and again the *Yes* must be spoken to him . . . to liberate him from the dread of abandonment which is the foretaste of death." This might be said to be the creed of social work but just as a creed inadequately expresses the nature of a personal God, so does this creed in no way describe how the "Yes" is to be spoken to the client. It certainly is not to be expressed verbally for the average client will either discard it as cant and hypocrisy or will just fail to understand what you are talking about.

I will give an illustration from the psychiatric field where the problems of communication are even more intense, owing to the patient's regression into a world of fantasy.

Freida Fromm-Reichmann in her book *Recent Advances in Psycho-Analysis* writes of the treatment of schizophrenic patients who had been thought to be beyond the reach of therapy from an analyst. She describes how one of the doctors had regular interviews—two one-hour sessions a week—with a very disturbed and distrustful patient and these continued for six months before the client was capable of talking with the therapist. Six months of sitting together in silence without any attempt to force the pace, for this would have been completely destructive of the therapeutic "permissive" atmosphere. This is an extreme example of the non-verbal use of interview time; by his acceptance of the client the doctor is saying that the client is important; that he is still worthy of such respect (this may be in spite of some of the most blatant attempts to offend against any sense of propriety by urinating on the therapist's chair or openly masturbating or smearing faeces); that the therapist is willing to wait until the patient is willing to accept and trust him before he advances to the patient. The therapist is also implying that the client is just as any other human being, capable of "the transition from a possibility in the spirit to a reality in the wholeness of the person".* All this has been said without the use of a word.

When we look closely at our everyday experiences with people we realise that even for the most articulate of us the important things are expressed non-verbally and with the less articulate and less developed intellectually, for whom thought and life are seldom separable from emotional reactions, this becomes true of almost all they wish to express. Thus the social caseworker must be aware constantly of what he is saying when he is not talking and the implications to his client of even the least act. I regularly saw one boy in an American Institution for three months and at the end he was asking exactly the same questions as he was at the beginning, but since at nearly sixteen he could not recite the months of the year without help it is not surprising that verbal communication was ineffective. If however I had ceased to see him because I felt our conversation was not worthwhile, being little more than making music together, what would this have said to him? He would have felt that he was not worth my attention, that adults do not think

*This is Kierkegaard's definition of "existence".

you important if you cannot achieve and that for him there was no longer any hope of overcoming the odds against him. These things the world had repeatedly said to him and if we could not give him the hope of change then we were nailing down the lid on the coffin of his self-esteem.

I have dealt at some length with the means by which the social caseworker is expected to communicate but said little of the presuppositions upon which he bases what he is trying to communicate. This is the realm of philosophy or theology, for it is founded upon our concept of the nature of man and society and demands imposing our own personal concepts upon what could otherwise be a "value-free" technique like X-ray therapy or physical treatment. One of the few American writers that I have read who states the philosophical ground on which he builds is Felix Biestek S.J. of Loyola University, Chicago. His ground is the "conviction that a person has innate dignity and worth which is derived from his filial relationship to God and which cannot be lost by the individual's weakness or failure." He expresses the principles of the caseworker's approach to the client as:

1. Individualisation—(the recognition of the client's sanctity as an individual).
2. Purposeful expression of feelings.
3. Controlled emotional involvement.
4. Acceptance.
5. The Non-judgmental attitude.
6. Client self-determination.
7. Confidentiality.

Of course this is not a new discovery; apply these principles to Christ's "one interview" casework with the woman taken in adultery and you will see how old the technique is, you will also see how we pre-suppose the non-verbal element; Christ did not verbalise the elements of acceptance and individualisation but we take them for granted as the foundations of his work with people. It might be questioned whether he was non-judgmental but he clearly usually left his "client" to choose and in choosing to judge himself.

We have seen the means and the ethical basis of social casework and these create many internal tensions in the worker and the client. Whilst you may be easily convinced of our fundamental concept of the innate dignity of the client, the conviction of the client is not as easy. If your mother was a prostitute and a drunkard, and your

father a heavy drinker who violently assaulted the family and whose scarred face one only looked on with fear, are you going to be easily convinced that there is any particular dignity about being human? And even if for one moment the boy I have in mind could have accepted this theory what could I answer when he said "If you are right, man, say how is it most of the whites round here won't be seen dead in the company of negroes like me?" This introduces another fundamental tension, how far should one "adjust" a delinquent to a society which is far from ideal? Dostoevski in his *Notes from Underground* writes . . . "May it not be that he (man) loves chaos and destruction because he is instinctively afraid of attaining his goal and completing the edifice he is constructing." May this not be more true of the delinquent who does not wish to become a "fully adjusted" adult in a society in which he knows he will never be more than a second class citizen? There is a constant tension between one's knowledge of the client's need to be able to accept authority and assume a reliable role in society and one's knowledge that in doing so he is likely to compromise his right to rebel against that which is wrong in society. In the States there is great pressure on the individual in the direction of acceptance of society as it is and this makes for great inner tension even in the mature adult over this problem.

A young artist in New York told me how he had looked around and found society to be far from perfect, in fact there seemed plenty wrong with it but everyone else seemed quite satisfied with it, so he thought "it must be me who is sick" and went along to one of the public hospitals to see the psychiatrist. "Luckily he was a good psychiatrist who said there was nothing much wrong with me—I was quite right—society was sick."

To the social worker who does not accept dogmatic solutions to his client's problems life is lived on the edge of the abyss; he carries within him the tensions of the individual seeking meaning for himself and society, the tensions between the moral stand and the great compromise from which there is no return . . . "He meets every new situation with a quiet sureness out of the depths of his being, yet he meets it with the fear and trembling of one who has no ready made answer to life." For the true lover of men must look out beyond the "integration of the personality", for to him, in the words of Buber "one becomes whole in order to be able to respond to what addresses one".

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Father's Footsteps

A. William Holmes

I had listened with uneasy attention to the pontifications of two bishops (Evangelical and High Church), three headmasters (one Grammar and two Junior Secondary), various film stars (one male, three female), two University professors (Homiletics, Oxbridge; Nuclear Physics, Red Brick), but no solution to the problem of juvenile delinquency had presented itself.

I decided the only thing to do was to go to the source and, with this in mind, selected a typical boy for the experiment. The first difficulty to be overcome was that of communication. I immediately discovered that he did not know what a "Juvenile" was and the word "Delinquent" got no reaction from him whatsoever; apparently he had no idea he was either of these. Finally, through the medium of "cosh boys", "flick boys" and "teddy boys", we achieved some sort of common ground.

I gathered that he thought the real reason for the problem was lack of parental control, maladjustment of the ego, misguided discipline and the circumstantial force of prevalent conditions; in fact, the same reasons advanced in more circumlocutory terms by the aforesaid bishops, headmasters, film stars, etc.

"It's the old man's fault", is how he put it. "See what I mean? I ain't got no chance."

It wasn't easy to get a general elucidation of his position, so I had to put particular questions. I asked him first about the wearing of peculiar apparel indicating his own sartorial preference.

"It's only like he did", he contended, "see his picture in the family album—drain pipe trousers, string tie, and arse-length jacket—he was a regular teddy boy was my old man."

I knew what he meant and, blushing from the recollection of my own family album, I hurried on to the next question. I asked him how he excused violence, petty torture and beating up—was it some ancestral urge, or merely an angry protest against an uncompromising *status quo?*

"My old man used his belt—buckle end, too." The remembrance of it made him rub his posterior tenderly. "Teacher had a cane,

bad enough on our hands but when we had to tighten our pants . . .! Old Smithy cuffed us o'er the ear—that's how they learnt us."

Now I felt I was getting down to things. I questioned him about the absurd loyalty which members of gangs had for each other. Did he think it was morally right to acquiesce in the anti-social misdemeanours of his pals and help them avoid the responsibility of their actions?

"We're all in it aren't we?" he said. "My old man goes on strike when one of his pals gets the sack or is victimised. It ain't his fault, he don't want a strike, but he comes out all the same. One's got to cover up for one's pals else where'd we be?"

On the subject of girls he was very frank. It appears, at any rate in his case, parental example has given him a justifiable right to promiscuity.

"What did my old man do the week Mum went to Brighton? Carted round a flashy doll—all legs and paint. Tryin' to be a father to her?—don't make me laugh."

On the evidence of his previous observations, I could have anticipated his response to my interrogation about the use of bad language.

"Time's butter won't melt in my old man's mouth—talk's clean, like I'm talkin' to you. But when he's roused, is the air blue? He can come all over "lah-di-dah"—like me now—but, well, you should have got an earful of what he said to the Hire Purchase man. . . ." I stopped him as I sensed he was about to get away from the "clean, lah-di-dah" talk and this might prejudice my chances of reporting any further illuminating disclosures he might make.

"But," I objected, "don't you think each one of us has a moral obligation to support things ordained for the benefit of society as enacted by our legislature?"

He looked dazed. "Come again", he said.

I modified the question. After all, "when in Rome . . ." "Do you think it wrong to break the law?" I asked.

He laughed. "Ain't that what they're made for? Them as makes 'em tryin' to trap the likes o' me? My old man says the whole crowd should be dumped into the Thames—jolly good job, I say. There's laws for the rich and laws for the poor, see? We ain't got a chance. My Dad says they trampled him down, and they're not goin' to trample me down."

On the subject of liquor drinking, again he seemed to feel that parental example had insidiously influenced his own attitude.

"Got walloped the first time I took a sip of the old man's whisky. He ought to have known better—that gave me a thirst for it. Anyway, why should I drink lemonade while he downs his beer? I ain't no milk-sippin' sissy."

I asked him if he thought that the instability brought about by two world wars and the present uncertainty of international relationships under the shadow of the threat of atomic warfare was responsible for his unco-operative attitude.

"Aw nuts", he said, "Mister we don't care a damn about them things. We just want to be left alone. As my old man says—'There's always some guy wantin' to push you around'. We just don't want to be pushed, see?"

I finally suggested he was perhaps unfortunate in possessing a father who had set him such a detrimental example and sympathised with him for his hard luck in that direction.

"Here, wait a minute", he said truculently, "watch your step, Mister. I ain't said nothin' about my old man. He's all right—it's not his fault—he's only what his parents made him."

I can't help but think that juvenile deliquent or not, that boy's got something, something which puts him on a level with the aforementioned bishops, headmasters, film stars, etc.

* * * *

C.M. writes: In what I said about St. Katharine's Foundation, Stepney (PRISM, November) it seens that I may have laid myself open to misinterpretation. My criticisms were of course directed against theological colleges which give inadequate instruction about what English society is like and how to approach ministering to it, and certainly not against St. Katharine's and places like it which help remedy this shortcoming. The more ordinands that go there, the better.

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Rex Walford

The revolutionary changes in the environment and thought-habits of society in the last hundred years have served to underline one fundamental fact about the nature of the Incarnation—that it took place in a thought and culture pattern very different from that of our own. Our own great-grandfathers were perhaps nearer to the climate of that time than they are to us; since 1850 the great pace of scientific revolution and technological change has made the problem of communicating the Gospel in modern life more and more urgent.

The problem occurs because Christian faith takes its stand on a firmly historical act—that at a certain point in time the Son of God came to earth in a particular place in order to accomplish a redemptive act by his death and resurrection which would have meaning not just for those who were his contemporaries but through all history. Today there is difficulty in communicating the full meaning of this act because to a twentieth-century unbeliever the fact that the Christ-event is firmly anchored in time (and a fairly remote time to modern minds) makes it difficult for it to appear relevant to a world so changed by man's efforts and achievements—particularly in the scientific field—that a first century Palestinian would find it unrecognisable. What possible relevance, for instance, have the reactions of simple fisher-folk in Capernaum to the world of electronic computers? What bearing have simple agricultural parables upon a highly industrialised society? This "irrelevance" of Christianity has, in another way, been fostered by the Church herself. Wrapping the Nativity story in a cocoon of pseudo-folk tale (with the Brownies usually enlisted to dance barefooted in the chancel), she has acquiesced in the idea that the Incarnation is a pretty-pretty event which can, if necessary, be quite safely consigned to the limbo of legend. And if there is a lack of emphasis on Incarnational theology, then it is not surprising that, to some, the Christian interpretation of life seems based on a theological vacuum which

has no contact with real history. Nigel Dennis summed the Church up in his neo-Shavian preface to *Cards of Identity* by writing:

"The human inquirer is placed in the centre of an imagined area and surrounded by a magic circle of invisible points . . . When the fancied identities of these fixed points have been explained to the human being, he is warned, trained, or forced to adopt a certain attitude towards them, to stand in a certain relation to them. . . . he thus obtains a sense of self based upon his position in a scheme."

The dangers of a "timeless" incarnation unrelated to history are, then, just as dangerous as those of a narrowly historical one which fails to communicate universally to a much-changed world.

Something must be done to build a bridge between the average 1960 unbeliever and the 1st-century Christ-event unless we are prepared to accept the fact that the life and deeds of Jesus are going to become progressively more difficult to understand (except to an expert few) because of the "olden-time" aura which surrounds them in the eyes of modern man.

One suggested answer to the problem is that the listener must deepen his understanding of the environment and historical situation of Christ's time in order to better understand the Gospel, and thus compare it with our own. But is it really a live option to suggest that communication of the Gospel in the future will depend on a study of Palestinian thought-forms and customs which will need to preface and accompany any attempt to use the Gospel in an evangelistic way? It surely seems a somewhat obtuse and pessimistic view of the essentials of Christian teaching if they are tied firmly to the consequential happenings of a primitive agrarian society in their telling. Already in the Sunday Schools of Britain's larger cities, the stories of the Sower and the Lost Sheep need some preliminary explanation in their original context before they begin to make their point. The more our own society moves away from the time of 1st-century Palestine the more difficult it becomes to fully comprehend and adequately explain both Jesus's message, and his position in his own time.

Perhaps a more hopeful way forward—for all its dangers—is through the process of a radical demythology, so that the key factors of the Gospel are made not "out-of-time" or fact-loosely historical, but perpetually relevant. The less extremist disciples of Bultmann have done much to show that demythologising the Gospel does not necessarily mean eliminating it, but as yet, the attempt to re-

clothe it in thought-forms that are understandable by the majority of unbelievers today has gone largely by default.

In this the Church might well profit from being more unorthodox and adventurous than hitherto. The important fact of the Incarnation is important, after all, not simply as a happening, but *because* of its ultimate relevance on a personal level. It is to be viewed in the last resort not so much in objective but in relative terms—because the act of Jesus in history was concerned with the relationship of men to God, and it is this change in relationship (from estranged to redeemed) which is fundamental to the Christian world-view.

The Christ-act therefore has its relevance in 1960 as much as in the 1st century, a theological truism which justifies the existence of the Church. It is history and yet more than history, an act performed once but with continuous effect. It is the apex of history—and how far from this apex we are is comparatively unimportant; the key fact about the act (and the message which the Church wants to communicate) is that all men can benefit from this act if only they have ears to hear.

If this is so, it seems to me that it is legitimate to translate the historical context of the Incarnation into whatever culture-pattern is thought most likely to produce sensitivity in those who listen to it being preached. In other words, the communication of the Gospel can be perpetually contemporary in its translation yet rooted in history in its fact.

This is an idea which the Church does not yet seem entirely happy to accept, although worried and unhappy about its own ability to make an impact in modern society. Those who *have* led the way have been those who have intuitively expressed the view through their artistic inclinations; its dialectical exploration still has, in the main, to come.

For instance, the late Sir Stanley Spencer's unusual but brilliant paintings of "Christ at Cookham Regatta" and "Christ carrying the cross through the streets of Cookham" have been condemned as incoherent incongruity by some. To others they are examples of the way in which a painter's environment becomes immersed in his whole urge to state a particular truth. As Eric Newton has pointed out, "Spencer interprets the Bible in terms of Cookham in much the same way as *Green Pastures* interprets God in terms of the Negroes of the Southern States." Spencer's work is indeed the contemporary extension of the work of the great Dutch and Italian

masters—whose Virgins were often painted with Dutch and Italian faces against Dutch and Italian backgrounds.

In drama, this possibility of remythologising the Incarnation has been lately explored by Stuart Jackman in his play "The Backyard Miracle" which centred on the conversion of a suburban hotel owner who discovered that visiting "diplomats" and some African labourers were interested in a baby which was being born in his garage. Said Jackman in his preface:

"So long as the New Testament is seen as a record of events which took place in the first century and are therefore remote from us, people will find it difficult to attempt, with any conviction, to order their lives in the power of its teaching. At best they will find it interesting in the way that details of life in Norman Britain are interesting . . . the remoteness of the Bible is a remoteness of ideas . . . we must try to clothe those ideas—which are not exclusively first-century ideas—but eternal ones—in the vestments of twentieth century life."

We need more plays, pictures, TV programmes (such as ATV's bold "Christ in Jeans"), poems (such as R. F. Colvile's "When Joseph came to Somers Town") which will strip off the inessential excrescences of the Gospel in order to more readily reveal its living truth. We need also perhaps a 1960 interpretation of the parables, a psychological novel about the opponents of Jesus, a modern-dress film of the life of Christ, amongst other things, in order that in preaching and teaching the Church can better communicate with the unbeliever in today's world.

Both in its methods of communication, and in the range of art-forms which it uses, the Church may have to be much more bold and experimental in carrying the Gospel into society.

Tillich wrote in *The Protestant Era:*

"The Protestant message for the man of today cannot be a direct proclamation of religious truths as they are given in the Bible and in tradition, for the situation of the modern man of today is precisely one of doubt about all this . . . the Christian doctrines . . . cannot in this form be the message of the Church to our time . . ."

The continual remythologising of the Gospel in the contemporary terms of society may well be the best way in which the Church preserves eternal Truth, and also communicates it successfully to those who at present find Christianity outmoded and irrelevant.

Abbey: Museum or Church?

James Portman

At the entrance to the Royal Chapels in Westminster Abbey there is a highly businesslike ticket-vending machine operated in a highly businesslike manner by a highly businesslike employee of the Church of England. That's God's truth. I don't joke about such things. I suppose it's a sign of the times—the final evidence of the Abbey's evolution from one of the world's most noble churches into one of the world's most notable sideshows.

Gaping, gawking and giggling they come—Mom, Dad and their snot-nosed brats out doing the Abbey. Pimply, gum-chewing adolescents. Paunchy Americans with cameras slung about their necks. Noisy school parties. Shuffling coach parties. And even the occasional Christian.

"The Church is the greatest hypocrite of all." One hears this remark with disturbing frequency, and many Christians are troubled by their increasing inability to adequately refute it. How can they when they are aware, for example, of the present state of affairs at Westminster Abbey and, to a lesser degree, the many Cathedrals scattered throughout England?

In a famous wartime address, Prime Minister Menzies of Australia suggested that the dominant characteristic of the English nation was its capacity for "muddling through". Perhaps the Church relies too heavily on this dubious virtue. This seems the most reasonable and charitable explanation for some of its current policies. Nevertheless, anyone who loves his church must have grave misgivings about the Abbey's conspicuous success in capturing the tourist population.

I don't like visiting the Abbey. I find it a depressing experience. The last time I was there I was accompanied by a young Canadian priest. To him, the Abbey was a place of Christian pilgrimage. We walked through the door to find the place cluttered with noisy offensive tourists. My companion stopped dead. "This is a church?" he asked. And a few minutes later, after having surveyed the desecration more carefully: "I feel sick."

This—is a church? It is the husk of what was once a church. Admittedly, it retains all the outward trappings of worship, and there

are regular services for the benefit of the tourist who wishes to boast to his friends back home that he actually attended church in Westminster Abbey. This is all very well, but it does not alter the fact that for the rank and file of those who daily invade the Abbey, the place is a museum, a historical relic, a building originally inspired by some remote religion called Christianity.

In it can be seen tombs and statues in memory of kings and scientists and painters and poets and musicians—and of course, Christians. In its tolerance, the church has even welcomed the remains of those who in their lifetime were anatagonistic to its teachings. All manner of men—including agnostics—have been honoured by Abbey memorial services. It is understandable how this came about: the Abbey is widely regarded as a national shrine. But does not the Church have a sacred trust to ensure the Abbey's pre-eminence as a religious shrine?

It seems clear that the Church has two choices: it must either kick out the tourists or leave them in sole possession. It seems equally clear that the latter course would be the easier solution.

Negotiations could therefore start immediately with either the National Trust or Ministry of Works to take over the Abbey. Perhaps the Ministry of Works, with its interest in Ancient Monuments, would be more suitable since it already operates one section of the building—the museum. The Church might be permitted removal of the high altar, candlesticks and a few other odds and ends, but by and large, the contents of the Abbey must be left alone since they obviously belong to The People.

Once having removed the Abbey from the tradition-bound clutches of the Church, the Ministry of Works could commence a restrained programme of modernisation. The Abbey is not too attractive in its present form. It is cluttered with statues, tombs, pews and other impediments to a steady flow of tourist traffic. Many of these objects are dull and frequently nauseating to behold, and I am sure the Ministry would be wise in removing those which hold little interest for the general public.

The Royal Chapels can be left as they are, but if the Abbey is to be a profitable enterprise, admission to them should be raised. Special lighting effects could be installed to evoke "drama".

With a few alterations, the choir and chancel would make an ideal tearoom. Some degree of respectability should be maintained here, so only those properly attired (i.e. jacket and tie) should be

admitted. For those who don't dress properly, quick service hamburger stands might be set up in one or two of the less interesting chapels . . .

. . . But wait! Is this what the Church really wants? It could happen someday. It is exactly the sort of thing which has happened to some of the historic churches in Russia. It may be the easier solution to a distressing problem, but is it the right one? The alternative is to turn the Abbey back into a church. The difficulties of such a step would be formidable. There could be no half-way measures. To close the doors completely on the tourists and to admit only those who wish to attend service or pray silently would provoke outraged yelps of protest from a wide section of press and public. It would also deprive the Abbey of a major source of revenue—the pennies and sixpences dropped in the offering boxes by tourists. However, I believe it is the only solution. It would be a drastic but necessary piece of surgery on an ailing member of the Body of Christ.

We could, of course, leave things as they are. I think it would be merely the continuing betrayal of a trust, but no doubt there are muddle-headed defenders of the present ignominious situation who will assert that it is evidence of the Church's "adaptability". Adaptability. That, alas, is a favourite Church of England expression. Oh yes, we must move with the times. It was all right two thousand years ago for Our Lord to drive the money changers from His Father's House but today—well you know how it is —Fings Ain't Wot They Used T'Be.

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POETRY

SEEING ANGELS

For Deborah and John

Angels are difficult to see.

Once upon a time several
Were visible upon a single needle,
As full of interest and more exciting
Than microbes, molecules or penicillin,
With powers of concentration
Free from the limits of our thinking.
But modern angels are either ladies
Of prim and precise kindness,
Or cherubs, heads without bodies.
Divested of all the passions
Of actual infants, or abstract
Musical figures in a carpet,
Decoration without meaning.

But they have been seen.

I remember one in a barn,
Firmly chiselled features
Of merciful wrath, with wings
Doubling the strength of the arms,
And a handful of working sketches
From a pair of wedded lovers,
Travelling light to see visions
On the lonely roads that lead
To ruins on Greek islands,
On the high hills of the Meteora,
In the forests of Macedonia.

These are not the only angels.
The contemplation of energy
In a research laboratory
Through a labyrinth of figures
Can lead to the questions set
By animal poise and speed
For four hundred centuries
To our hunting fathers.

GEORGE EVERY, S.S.M.

MARY IN EGYPT

Not so long ago the viper
Bit Cleopatra. No more
Princesses bathe by the Nile.
Now the wealth of the soil
Carried down to the sea
Feeds a carefree capital city.
All the gods are gone, but one
Cries from the Nile, like Moses,
To a girl picking rushes,
Weaving them into a basket
To sell in the local market.
Wondering, like Miriam,
What will happen to him,
She sets her suffering son
Upon her lap as on a throne.

GEORGE EVERY, S.S.M.

WHEN THE WORLD DROWNED

for Chomingwen Pond, upon her baptism

When the world drowned it was your splendid guilt.
The fount could not contain the weight of carnage.
The marble shattered, and the water spilt.

(Water that, overflowing, rises faster)
Over the pews, the Andes, and the Alps.
And Noah did not float out this disaster.

Dead bodies rode the universal sea,
Rotating silent in the local whirlpools,
A thousand fathoms over the highest tree.

And sin, once called original (now standard
As the pale verse of Eliot's epigones)
Raged in the Bendix of the sea, was laundered

To apple red, the red of Abel's blood.
Colors at last were plainly separated,
And nothing was the color now of mud.

My body floated with the silent others.
I think I touched you in your lovely death.
All men were water-gone, all men were brothers.

When the first olive leaf awoke my skin,
When roses mounted through the dying water,
And the green world surged to the scarlet sun,

The live men frolicked in their ghostly freedom.
We danced with preëxistent unicorns,
Took bread and wine, and I was new as Adam.

CHAD WALSH.

THE ELEMENTS

I had almost forgotten the singing in the streets,
The snow piled up by the houses, drifting
Underneath the door into the warm room,
Firelight, lamplight, the little lame cat
Dreaming in soft sleep on the hearth, mother dozing
Waiting for Christmas to come, the boys and me
Trudging over the blanket fields waving lanterns to the sky.
I had almost forgotten the smell, the feel of it all,
The coming back home, with girls laughing like stars,
Their cheeks, holly berries, me kissing one,
Silent-tongued and soberly by the long church wall;
Then back to the kitchen table, supper on the white cloth,
Cheese, bread, the homemade wine,
Symbols of the night's joy, a holy feast.
And I wonder now, years gone, mother gone,
The boys and girls scattered, drifted away with the snowflakes,
Lamplight done, firelight over,
If the sounds of our singing in the streets are still there,
Those old tunes, still praising;
And now, a lifetime of Decembers away from it all,
A branch of remembering holly spears my cheeks,
And I think it may be so;
Yes, I believe it may be so.

LEONARD CLARK.

THE CRADLE AND THE TREE

In solitude you may not find
His cradle whom you soon must bind
In swaddling clothes. O but with men
In meeting them again, again,
Till they are grown as real and dear
As your own flesh, and you can trace
Within your glass, your brother's face;
And when you speak you always hear
Your brother's voice within your ear;
There, O there, for you and me
Lurks a cradle, and a tree.

EDITH ANNE ROBERTSON.

SIR BORS

Born of no strange unearthly origin,
He knew the worst of life and love and sin,
Bors, the plain man, humble and penitent,
Obediently to the world's end went.

Beyond lost seas, at legend's heart and height,
Accepted, shriven, armed in blood and light,
The peer of Galahad and Percivale,
He too achieved the adventure of the Grail.

And when they, burnt away with worshipping
Went home to Heaven with the Holy Thing
He with the sterner task, the harder lot,
Rode back again to life and Camelot.

HELEN GRUNDY.

Comment

N.M. writes

With the Bishop of Woolwich treating it like a lost book of the Apocrypha, and the Archbishop of Canterbury ticking him off as if he'd been caught reading *La Vie Parisienne* under the bedclothes —what is one to make of *Lady Chatterley?* Has the Archbishop actually read the book? His main criticism of the Bishop's evidence seemed to be that the book was about adultery and did not explicitly condemn it; and that because of this the book was immoral. But on this view Bishops would be prevented from passing complimentary judgments on much of the imaginative literature of the world. And what on earth can the Archbishop make of, for instance, the book of *Esther*—a large part of which is about polygamy and high-class prostitution without one word of condemnation?

At the heart of all this is a confusion about what is the point of literature. It's a fair bet that the anti-Chatterley school don't read many novels, poems, plays, at all—except perhaps those published between 1830 and 1914. There's no reason why they should. But this lack of love for literature makes them unfitted to pronounce on the standards by which it should be judged. It just hasn't struck them that the morality of a work of literature does not depend on the exhortations it makes like a tract, but on its truthful insight into experience and on its portrayal of this with—in the Bishop of Woolwich's admirable words—tenderness and reverence.

This interpretation of what is "moral" should commend itself to Christians, who are always being told that their New Covenant depends on such things as love and compassion for reality and not upon the analytical fantasies of law. But for some reason, we continue to imagine every now and then that Christ must really have been on the side of the Pharisees.

Serious criticism, however, of *Lady Chatterley* revolves around the descriptions of physical delight, and the use of words which make clear what the author is talking about and do not let a reader imagine fondly that it is all taking place on a cloud. And *a propos* of this there is the cavernous question—"Would you like your 14-year-old daughter to read it?"

The answer to this is that it probably doesn't matter very much if one's 14-year-old daughter reads it or not; but what does matter,

and matters very much indeed, is if one's daughter has been so deceitfully, narrowly and miserably brought up that her first contact with descriptions of physical love-making—whether in *Lady Chatterley* or anywhere else—will be such a shock to her as to do her harm. It is inconceivable in modern society that girls can healthily be barricaded from such descriptions: they will meet them in some form or other, probably at school. One could make out a good case for it even being better that they should meet them in *Lady Chatterley* than in garbled and often perverted gossip—certainly than in the pornographic magazines and comics that are easy to pick up at any bookstall. But the important point here is that if a girl is going to be harmed by *Lady Chatterley*, she will be (and will have already been) harmed by life anyway—and the responsibility for this lies firmly with the parents. The very question, in fact—"Would you like your daughter to read it?" is a condemnation not of the book, but of the people who ask it.

* * * *

R.D. writes

People are very angry over Paul Ferris's *Observer* articles about how the clergy—Anglican, Roman and Dissenting—spend their time. A chorus of annoyance followed the Anglican article and included a leader in the *Church Times* urging readers to write rude letters to the *Observer*. Fuel was added to the flames when the Roman article came out. "Of course they vetted it", a telephone talker said. "Can't you do something about it?" The fault, dear readers, is not in the press but in ourselves that we look such a feeble lot compared to the Romans. Paul Ferris is a perfectly impartial, and very good, journalist. His method is impressionistic and apparently haphazard, but his conclusions are sound: Anglican clergymen *are* good insurance risks, they *do* tend to have pink, boyish faces (although lots of them have been through it all right). What Ferris has presented is not the truth about the Church, but *the truth about what the Church looks like from the outside*. Similarly, his picture of the Roman church is an outsider's view and it certainly wasn't angled, or partisan or vetted, although more influential Romans (on the Continent and including the Pope) are interested in "ecumenicity" as an actual policy than the average Roman priest in England is, or realises or desires. But what Anglicans must do is not to mope or write angry letters to the papers—this makes us look sillier than ever, like a politician who protests at a caricature of himself—but to say first

of all, what is true, that the picture leaves out the whole idea that the parson's job has something to do with God, and second that this caricature contains enough of the truth to make self-examination more relevant than childish protests. We are—at least a bit—like what we appear to be. What we appear to be we don't like. Therefore let us be different, and then appear different. Being different will make us look more like the Romans, it will involve adopting at least some of Fr. Thornton's principles about priestly concentration in the worshipping community. It will mean a withdrawal from some positions which have already been overrun: it will mean disestablishment, it will mean far more *actual* sacrifices all round, and much less woolly thinking on our doctrinal positions and pastoral functions; it will mean far more episcopal authority; it will mean the downfall of the Parochial Clergy Association; it will mean the possibility of the Church of England becoming a religious body again; and finally it will sock the English Romans where it hurts most. The more we become like them the less need will there be for them.

* * * *

Fr. Sillett writes

The "old boy" network may—though I beg leave to doubt it—have been a suitable instrument for the Holy Spirit to guide the Church in the administration of its personnel in the eighteenth century. But in the light of the complexity of our present situation, and of the desperate shortages of manpower everywhere, is the Church not culpable if she does not avail herself of the fruits of modern experience and research in personnel administration? May I remind their Lordships of the statement made in the Report of the Committee on the Holy Bible: "It is the conviction of Christian faith that all knowledge comes from God and is to be reverenced as His gift; and that in all the discoveries of the sciences God has a purpose that they may be used to reflect His glory in the world. The Christian Church is therefore called . . . to learn from all new disclosures of truth". Do they exclude from the scope of this comment the techniques of personnel administration and business management? If they do, then they could equally well exclude the internal combustion engine and plan our activities on the assumption that we travel on foot or horseback or—at the most extreme—by bicycle!

* * * *

A correspondent writes

An invitation arrived to attend the press pre-view of the Church Teacher Training Colleges architectural exhibition at the Building Centre in Store Street. There were about half a dozen of us there who had accepted the invitation, and we spent a happy hour prowling amongst the exciting display of designs, photographs and models of which the exhibition consisted. Over half the colleges illustrated are Church of England foundations, fourteen for women, eight for men and four mixed ones. Twenty-two of the twenty-six have got something going on, from the relatively modest expansion at the College of St. Mark and St. John, Chelsea, to the completely new college planned for Canterbury.

The expansion coincides with the bulge, but more particularly with the introduction of the universal three-year course for teacher trainees. But the shortage of teachers is absolute, apart from immediate pressures; and as Mr. Harvey, who is responsible for the exhibition, explained, the allocation of large sums from church funds has been made in conscious co-operation with Ministry of Education policy. The £1¼ m. found from Anglican sources in fact represents 25% of the total budgeted for Church of England colleges alone; and the rest is raised from the Ministry. For all Christian teacher training colleges shown in this exhibition, the total sum is £9 m.

This is all enormously impressive. The variety of styles, too, makes clear that while neo-Georgian is taboo, contemporary architecture is by no means universally matchbox. The Cotswold dignity of Westminster College, Hinksey, already familiar to all who use the Oxford southern by-pass, is in complete contrast with the informal groupings planned for Canterbury. There the irregular quadrangles, pricked with casual trees and with some blocks on stilts to provide glimpses underneath of what comes next, centre on a daring square chapel, lit mainly by a four-pronged glass steeple. The plans for extending Norwich (notice the concentration on potential universities) are simpler; and those who fear money is being squandered are told that each student's bed-sitting room is fitted and pleasantly furnished for £100.

All this we were told, and much more, and then we were offered a drink. Over gin we revealed ourselves. A pundit from Church House was prominent in the little group. He thought the exhibition was rather good. Then somebody asked him what was the official

explanation for the fact that this expansion was taking place at the same time as the closure of hundreds of Church schools: while the Romans had opened 92 new schools last year at the same time as enlarging their teacher training colleges, the Church of England had shut down 312. The pundit sipped to savour this information. Then he thought of the answer. We are not trying to turn out Anglicans, not at all. Our purpose is surely to co-operate with the State in ensuring that the national character is formed along fundamentally sound lines. So now you know.

* * * *

R.M. writes

Recently the Bishop of Southwark giving the prizes away at a boys' school in his diocese, said that people had an obligation to take part in the life of the community and inform themselves of the facts in every situation. This is exactly what parents and staff have been trying to do, for after 299 years that school is threatened with extinction in a mass amalgamation scheme in another borough, and the Southwark Diocesan Board of Education who are sponsoring the plan worked it out in secret without consulting the interests or wishes of parents. Yet for Westminster and Miss Ironside's to amalgamate without first consulting parents is unthinkable. The Bishop would be among the first to maintain that Church school parents should have as much interest in their children's education as those who pay fees.

Cries of "Shame" greeted the Head Master's annual report which could hardly avoid mentioning the most important event in the school's three centuries' existence. We have often heard that the laity constitute the Church, but when they demand to participate in practical policy they are discouraged.

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WORLD DOMINION PRESS
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Reviews

WORK, edited by *J. M. Todd.* Darton, Longman & Todd. 30s.

In certain Church circles one often hears the phrase, "What we need is a new theology of work". Are there such things as "a theology" or "work", or is this another example of what the Germans call "mythos", an abstraction or quality treated as concrete, as, for example, "insights", "skills", "techniques" and "knowhow" (a barbarism which has not yet achieved a plural), and all the rest of the hideous jargon? What the theologians mean is, I suppose, that Christians ought to consider seriously and afresh how people work, what they are working for, and whether the Christian faith has any contribution to make in this sphere, a pertinent question since it has long since appeared remote from and irrelevant to the working world.

In recent years there has been much discussion and research within the Church on this matter, all over the world among non-Romans, and, in the Roman Communion, particularly in France and Germany. English Roman Catholics now make an offering to the study in the form of a symposium, *Work*, edited by John M. Todd, the record of conversations at Downside Abbey. Quite honestly one cannot say that this is an important contribution to the subject. It covers no new ground, suffers from the usual theological inhibitions, and has not yet caught up with World Council of Churches' social thought; but it can be commended on the strength of three honest and honourable essays by John Todd, Fr. John Foster and Reginald Trevett, which show a breakaway from the social teaching of Leo XIII and the last two Pii. These three articles, published as a separate entity, might be a valuable introduction to a newcomer with a conventional church background.

But the symposium leads one to ask several fundamental questions. For instance: what part does faith play in one's work? Does it merely help us to be good individual Christians in the working world (as some of the contributors seem to think), or does it prompt us to make a specific contribution to or revolution in that world? Or again, can a Christian engaged in certain types of work degrading to human personality or destructive of human society, such as "hypnotic" advertisement or armaments, be contented merely

to work for his living, or should he consider becoming a Luddite? (Aldermaston and Swaffham seem to be signs that younger people take this much more seriously than professional social theologians.) Or again, was Joe Oldham right—I quote from memory—when he said, "There is no problem of work; it's just there"? Is work something we have to do, like breathing, without important moral issues? For the bulk of factory workers this seems to be the case; but, if so, why the prevalent sense is unease? As a worker said recently to me, "You can't really be honest in industry." Is there somewhere a longing for the redemption of one's working life?

This popular game of asking the right questions does not get us very far. Are there answers? The non-Roman Catholic will normally begin by asking, "What has the Bible got to say about it?" (It is curious that the symposium looks to Greek and Roman roots, to the Fathers of the Church and, when the theologians take over from the laity, to that old *deus ex-machina*, Aquinas, but not to the Bible. One contributor, an ex-Methodist, seems to have sensed this peculiarity.) As far as one can see, scripture gives no direct guidance, but it appears to distinguish between *toil*, a burdensome condition of man separated from God, and *work within the kingdom of God*, which demands and calls into play our whole being. By such work God is honoured and obeyed and man finds his beatitude. For a Roman Catholic and certain types of Calvinist, who tend to identify the Church with the kingdom, this distinction can only lead to pietistic triviality. But if you regard the kingdom as the restoration of God's sovereignty through Christ over all his creation, something already here and yet to come, you will have before you an ideal expressing itself in quite concrete actions; and work within the kingdom becomes both divine activity and the divinely given means by which the human race can re-render all things to God. The same task may be both toil and work; if it is incapable of being work alter it or smash it. (Perhaps a caution against deciding precipitately is needed.)

Canon Cardijn, the founder of Jocism, originally saw his young men and women as people who would claim industry for Christ and fight that it should recognise and obey God's laws; in fact, that man should work not for Production but for God. Here was a vision which is still valid, even if Catholic action swallowed up the Jocists and turned them into cogs in the Catholic propaganda mill. No doubt, as the Vatican has more than once seen, Cardijn's way

was full of dangers; it involves Christians in all sorts of political and social consequences, from which the majority of the "faithful" hold aloof. To their great credit Fr. Foster and Mr. Todd in the symposium have not done so. They would be good partners in an ecumenical enterprise on the subject.

FRANK DE JONGE.

Time and Tide

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ON BEING THE CHURCH IN THE WORLD, by *J. A. T. Robinson.* S.C.M. Press. 16s.

The Bishop of Woolwich is no latter day Augustine, and his book of essays is not, in spite of its title, about "Being the Church" a city at unity with itself amid the distractions of Pandaemonium. On the contrary the Bishop is out to stake our claim in Pandaemonium:

"The whole existence of the Church is orientated towards that area of life which, within this age does not yet acknowledge the sovereignty of God established over it in Christ."

The essays vary considerably in purpose and value. Some are very good of their kind. That on power is an important enquiry into the theology of politics and power: that on race relations a demonstration piece in how to popularise a theological morality without debasing it. Some, like that on matter, are competent restatements of accepted doctrine, others merely kites to catch the winds of controversy. But all of them insist that the Church's work is here and now, within the social and natural order.

The Bishop and his friends sometimes write as if they were struggling alone with our fierce reluctance to recognise this claim. And there is a fierce reluctance among Church people, not to leave the sanctuary (praying too much is not really an Anglican vice), but to come away from parish tea cups and cosy committee rooms at Westminster. But the Bishop is not a lone pioneer . . . many of us sympathise with his general conclusion and find him a welcome reinforcement in a persistent battle. Where he does break some new ground is in deriving a view of the Church/World relationship not from Christology, but from Biblical theology and a doctrine of the Church. This is important. It is therefore unfortunate that he should define and discuss the Church in terms of what it does (the Church "is the instrument of the Kingdom"), not of what it is, and so conduct us on a circular tour of the argument. We come to some very slippery places. The Bishop comes so dangerously near to presenting Christianity as a revolutionary movement designed to achieve a millenial Utopia that all the goodwill in the world cannot stifle a certain disquiet.

The Bishop's bias is determined consciously by his Biblical studies, unconsciously by Hegelian determinism. The argument, *The Social Content of Salvation*, depends for example on the unquestioned

assumption that social change follows a dialectical pattern, and as with most arguments of this kind its history is doubtful. It just is not true that mediaeval Catholicism invariably used techniques of mass conversion, there is at the least the small exception of the Franciscan Missions. This conditioning, unhampered by the discipline of systematic theology leads the Bishop to extremes. He insists that the Church's duty is here and now, but is unnecessarily contemptuous of its witness to the transcendent, and like many Biblical Scholars, creates a factitious emnity between the Greek and the Hebraic elements in Christian teaching.

> "(The Bible) doctrine of Creation is not the Greek notion of spirit trying to impose form . . . on a . . . matter for which it is not responsible . . ."
>
> "This notion that a man's destiny is decided at death is one for which there is no real support in the Biblical imagery. It is in the Greek mythology that the Fates operate at death . . ."
>
> "The pagan notion, endorsed by so much Christian spirituality, that life is a preparation for death. . . ."

And so on. We are meant to infer that the twist in the Faith, our concern with "pie in the sky" and judgment hereafter, the shocking interest we have in our immortal souls, everything stigmatised as "other worldly" is pagan in origin, and due to the Greeks.

Now as F. D. Maurice, and indeed some of the Fathers, taught, the special revelation to the Jews has its counterpart in a general revelation to the Gentile nations. The fact that a concept has a Greek origin does not necessarily make it incompatible with Christian truth. But even so . . . is this lurid picture true? Are we really so frightened to death about death? Are our eyes so firmly fixed on Doomsday that we cannot recognise a more immediate judgment? Here is a real extremist on death:

> "That which we call life is but *Hebdomada Mortium*, a *weeke of deathes*, seaven dayes, seaven periods of our lives, spent in dying, a *dying seaven times over;* and there is an end."

It is uncommonly awkward of Dr. Donne that, having provided a perfect example of the shocking perversion of Scriptural truth of which Dr. Robinson complains, he should toss off, in parenthesis, Dr. Robinson's own teaching "For the union of the body and soule makes the man . . .", and should persist in talking not of judgment but of God's deliverance, though he himself when preaching this sermon was at the point of death. Or here is a modern divine:

"If (God) ceased from creating me I should cease to exist; he does not let me be he continues to sustain me. Nevertheless in so far as I profane and falsify my relation to the well spring of my life, I begin to shrivel and perish . . . I am on the way that leads to everlasting death. . . ."

The Church's teaching about death and judgment is not, in fact, the grinning Aunt Sally that Dr. Robinson so easily bowls down. And by the same token its teaching about the after life (I wonder, by the by, what happens in the Bishop's Biblical Studies to the Epistles of St. James and St. Peter) is not a simple reproduction of pagan myths. There is little in common between the nightmare of the squeaking ghosts in the *Odyssey*, and the vision of the *Paradiso*.

The fact is that the Bishop relies, in his arguments, on over simplification:

"(The Bible) doctrine of Creation is not the Greek notion of spirit trying to impose form or design on an intractable porridgey mass of matter for which it is not responsible."

Neither is the Greek. The distinction in Greek philosophy (Plato's *Timaeus* is the relevant text) is not between spirit and matter at all, but between that which belongs to the realm of Being and is unchanging and Eternal, and that which belongs to the realm of Becoming, is transient and subject to time. The matrix, or receptacle in which the DemiUrge-Creator orders the world of time according to the pattern of Divine Reality is not in the modern sense of the world material at all. And it is worth noticing that when *on the same page* Dr. Robinson speaks of the *logos*, the reason and order of God in the material world, he is using a concept which passed into Christian thinking from the Platonic account of the making of the world. This point is not merely technical . . . it effects the whole question of our other worldliness in attending to the destiny of our immortal souls. What does the Greek say about man? He says that of his nature he belongs to the realm of Eternal things and should aspire to it. The distinction between soul and body is not that one is spiritual and the other material, but that one is subject to change, the other not. Now what does the Scripture say about man? That he was made of the dust of the earth and given life by the breath, the spirit, of God. The distinction between matter and spirit is after all not so unknown to the Jew. The point is that Jew and Greek both, in struggling towards an understanding of man's nature, came to feel that we find the principle of our being, and our fulfil-

ment in a relationship with what is Eternal and Unchanging.

Dr. Robinson's indifference or hostility to that part of revelation which sets mankind and the Church in the perspective of the Eternal, brings him near to a serious error. In the essay on the Priesthood of Believers he complains that the Ministry of Absolution has not been linked with a conception of the relationship between the individual and the Church. This is not true. So widely used a text book as Harton's *Elements of the Spiritual Life* specifically declares that the penitent come to Confession, among other things, to seek reconciliation with the Church, whom the priest represents. But Dr. Robinson's phraseology is, anyway, uncommonly odd. He talks of the "forgiving Community" and says that Absolution is pronounced in "the name of the whole Church". What does the Priest in fact say?

> "Almighty God . . . who . . . hath given power and commandment, to his Ministers, to declare and Pronounce the Absolution and Remission of their sins: *He pardoneth and absolveth.* . . ."
>
> "By his authority committed to me I absolve thee. . . . "

The power of forgiving sins is not in fact vested in the Church, but delegated to it. Again one would not realise in Dr. Robinson's discussions of Liturgy that at Holy Communion the Church is engaged in "showing forth the Lord's death", that the Archetypal Eucharist is not the consecration of the work of men's hands, but the Offering and Consecration of Christ's Body for the Death which awaited it; still less that Christ is still the Priest of his own Offering. The fact is that in his way of talking, sometimes in his way of thinking, the Bishop comes within a knife's edge of turning the Church into an autonomous reality . . . of giving it that place in the faith which belongs to God himself.

This is, of course, only his way of talking . . . but it is worth saying that even a good thing can be ill-defined . . . that even a great truth, if held in an unbalanced way can be the root of error, and finally of misery to the whole Body of Christ.

VALERIE PITT.

THE RIDDLE OF ROMAN CATHOLICISM, ITS HISTORY, ITS BELIEFS, ITS FUTURE, by *Jaroslav Pelikan*. Hodder and Stoughton. 16s.

The title of this book sets its tone. It is not polemical, but an enquiry into a riddle, a study in contrasts clearer in America than they are here. "How can one institution include both the Pontifical

Institute of Medieval Studies in Toronto and the shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe near Mexico City?" We could enlarge the instances: Etienne Gilson, Jacques Maritain, Christopher Dawson with the late Senator McCarthy, the Knights of St. Columba, the celebration of Holy Week in New Mexico and Guatemala. The comprehensiveness of the Church of Rome is more of a puzzle in America than it is here, because most, though not all, of the Protestant communions there are of one theological and racial colour, and split so very easily on doctrinal and cultural issues. Dr. Pelikan, the author of this book, is an American Lutheran, Professor of historical theology in the Federated Theological Faculty of Chicago, and departmental editor for religion of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. He has studied with the Jesuits and admires Paul Tillich, but unlike him writes English with a clarity that any American of British origin might envy. A kind word for Schleiermacher, the father of German Liberal Protestantism, and respect for Harnack, the historian of dogma, show that he is no blind follower of the modern revival of Protestant orthodoxy. Nevertheless he is a son of the Reformation, which to him is primarily the German Reformation. He is one of the co-editors of the American translation of Luther.

In his eyes however the Reformation is a tragedy. With nearly all that he says on this almost any Anglican, and many Roman Catholics, must be sympathetic. Possibly he exaggerates the depth of the ditch that was dug at Trent, but he is far more aware than most that the division of Christendom was in the first place accomplished by the breach between East and West, that the revolt of the Reformation was against a Church already cut in two. His book should be read with one by another American Lutheran, Ernest Koenker, *The Liturgical Renaissance in the Roman Catholic Church*, as a further study from a Protestant viewpoint in the theological significance of the present direction, not only of liturgical change in the Church of Rome, but of a new attitude to history and to the study of the Scriptures which makes possible a new kind of exchange of views, in which all the old polemics seem out of date.

This may lead in two directions, and to this quality of movement Dr. Pelikan is perhaps insufficiently sensitive. He writes for instance "There is very little sympathy for Roman Catholic Mariology outside the borders of the Roman communion". But to this there is a significant exception in his own country in Alan Watts's book on *Myth and Ritual in Christianity*. A version of Roman Catholic

Modernism that would sacrifice the historical identity of the Christian gospel to its universal appeal in lands where history means very little, or even arouses hostility, has some attraction without and probably within the Roman Catholic Church. The alternative, a reformation by return to historical standards not so completely confined to the letter of the Scriptures as in the Reformation of the sixteenth century, is the other possibility which may be becoming a probability. It is this that would reopen the whole question of the grounds of our separation, especially if the infallibility of the Bible were redefined in terms which modify the meaning of infallibility in every other context.

The tone of this book is excellent, and the learning, in so wide a survey, has very few gaps and those not very important. My only doubt is whether Dr. Pelikan is sufficiently aware of the importance of some of the issues that cut across all denomination frontiers and divide Anglicans and Protestants as well as Roman Catholics. Perhaps the limitation of his target compels him to play them down except in a Roman Catholic context.

GEORGE EVERY, S.S.M.

NEW WAYS WITH THE MINISTRY, edited by *John Morris*. Published by the Faith Press. 3s. 6d.

This book is the fruit of the Group Ministry Conference held at Keble in the summer. Consists partly of the addresses given there, partly of essays inspired by the Conference. It should be read by all who are interested in the redeployment of the manpower of the Church of England and is worth 3s. 6d. for the Bishop of Woolwich's essay alone.

T.W.B.

Letters

THERMODYNAMICS, PSI AND GOD

Dear Sir,

May I comment on the article in your September issue by Mr. Appleby; especially I would like to criticise his suggested correlation of Psi-phenomena and "spiritual gifts".

The word "spirit" is confusing. It can be used to describe any happenings not, apparently, physical, in as far as their cause cannot be, or does not seem likely to be, immediately identified by one of the five recognised "senses". This is, for instance, the earliest Biblical use. Such "spirit" happenings can be morally good, bad or neutral, the actions of good or bad spirit. This is "spiritual" (1).

But "spirit" is also, in Christian talk, used "absolutely" (without any qualifying adjective or adverb), in a morally good sense, of the activity of God who *par excellence* "is" Spirit (or of the Holy Spirit, who "is" God), and in this use ("spiritual" (2)), "spiritual" describes a person or event as being positively under the control of the (good) Spirit, obeying or expressing His will. In this sense of "spiritual" any event, whether coming in the class of spiritual (1), or quite obviously physical in the normal sense, can still be spiritual (2). For the Christian, love, absolute concern, is *the* manifestation of Spirit (2), whether the unpredictable (spiritual (1)) elements Mr. Appleby discusses seem to enter into the living act or no.

The confusion arises when it is assumed, as Mr. Appleby seems to, especially in his last section ("Some Consequences for Religion"), that occurrences that are spiritual (1) are *the* place where occurrences that are spiritual (2) are likely to be found. He talks of ESP as a "spiritual gift" (ibid.), and thinks of the mystics as especially likely to have or have had Psi-abilities. St. Paul, *per contra*, talks of "love" as *the* spiritual gift; not the ability to communicate ideas (or move dice) without speech or obvious physical processes. The "spiritual" man is the man baptised. St. Paul also, of course, uses "spiritual" to mean, roughly, physical events physically inexplicable; but this is not the centre, only the rather embarrassing periphery of the activity of "spiritual" power; one feels he (and the writer of the Johannine Epistles) would have been grateful for another term to describe spiritual (1) phenomena. This is not to say that "spiritual" (1) is an illegitimate use of the word, it is the root use, and just *is*

still current; but it does make "spiritual" an imprecise term, and it needs to be employed warily.

To reaffirm the point, it is *not* legitimate to assume that because an event is spiritual (1) it is necessarily at all closely correlated with events that are spiritual (2). The phenomena that Mr. Appleby describes are at best morally neutral. They are to date entirely to do with play, with trifling events. I do not suggest that play as such is outside the concern of God. But as a Christian I do not expect to find God or spiritual (2) force most obviously and demonstrably at work in this sort of field. I would look first for love, in personal relationships. (The same stricture, often applied, can be made on the results of séances; even supposing that the "messages" received are not just the products of say, telepathy and a quick mind, they are so rarely morally and personally significant, that they may hardly be said to be coming from people enjoying a continuation of a full personal life, a spiritual (2) life. At most they suggest the half-life of a classical Hades or Sheol, bound to a joyless reliving of the past.)

The evidence Mr. Appleby adduces seems to demand a rather different analysis. Allowing for the sake of argument, the genuineness of Psi-phenomena (though one would obviously want a much more thorough investigation than has at present been made, before finally accepting their reality), it is still not necessary nor even very helpful to call them "non-physical"; I think it would be less question-begging to say they are only "not physical in the sense in which we at present understand physics", that they are "not bound by space and time (if this be the case) in the sense in which we at present understand space and time". I would *suggest* that they *are* physical, but that we just do not yet understand physics fully. I would expect them to be as classifiable (=reducible to "laws") as the obviously physical phenomena we can at present recognise and classify.

This is a little-investigated area; it is always tempting to discover "God" in the gaps in scientific knowledge. But the "god in the gaps" (I think the phrase is Prof. Coulson's) has been expelled from many earlier gaps, and I do not think it likely that we will have at last tracked him down to a safe one; we will not be able to prove God by even quasi-physical experiments of this sort. The only relevant experiment is living by trusting faith and seeing if His love works powerfully in you; and this is quite indecisive. You cannot put God

to any definitive test . . . But you can existentially make the faith-test, despite the supposed dilemma the determinist faces you with; his is only a verbal trick that does not stand up to analysis, it is only yet another faith-assertion opposing the Christian one, and is no more susceptible of proof or disproof than the latter; it certainly does not need to be knocked on the head by any indeterminacy principle.

Further, I suggest that this idea that you may be able to *prove* the activity of God-Spirit does in fact spring from the muddle between the two uses of "spiritual", the neutral and the morally positive. The neutral is subjectible to experiment (and is therefore probably best called "physical" in the end). The morally positive is not. The Christian has been driven by the moral distinction in fact to make a metaphysical, as well as a moral, distinction between spirit (1) and Spirit (2).

But even if the confusion in the term does not lie behind Mr. Appleby's suggestions, my own belief, that I offer to you, is that a Spirit subjectible to tests such as these that Mr. Appleby mentions, is not the Christian God; if Psi-phenomena were the realm of Spirit, and *the only realm of Spirit*, our Christian faith would be false.

Psi-phenomena, if real, are still interesting. They suggest latent God-given powers which could be used for good or bad, and which need to be studied, and if real, acquired, prayed about, and controlled, by Christians, so that they may in fact be spiritual (in sense (2)).

Yours faithfully
F. G. Downing

N.D.

Dear Sir,

Your advice to Christians on how to prevent a nuclear war would be unexceptionable but for the rather patronising piece about nuclear disarmers. You have gravely misrepresented our case.

It is as wrong to say of us that we desire unilateral nuclear disarmament "as an end in itself" as it would be to say that the repentance of a sinner is useless if he were a member of a gang of thugs.

We are extremely mindful of possible consequences and give a lot of thought to them. Of course we would welcome, and prefer, multilateral nuclear disarmament, but we don't think we will get it the way we are going about it now, that is, by threatening and increasing our capacity to cripple or annihilate the human race if

Russia should attack us or one of our allies. This is not conducive to any form of reconciliation or understanding.

How can Christians condone the theory of the so-called "deterrent"? A deterrent is only justified if you know that the weapon that deters can, in justice, be used.

We are in the terrible position of having to say (if we support the nuclear deterrent) that the end (peace on earth) justifies the means (threatening nuclear war).

We must not pretend that the consequences of continuing with our present "defence" policy will be anything less than a nuclear war, if not by design, then by accident.

Unilateral nuclear disarmament by any of the great nuclear powers, providing it were done by a government skilled in international diplomacy, could completely change the situation we are in now, and not necessarily for the worse; for what possible advantage could an aggressor gain from bombarding a nation with H bombs? or even threatening to do this?

We "unilateralists" happen to think our own country well-suited for taking the lead in this matter and that there is every reason in the world for campaigning to persuade our government to do so.

Yours sincerely,

JACK BOWLES.

London, S.W.6.

DISESTABLISHMENT

Dear Sir,

While I am grateful to PRISM for its support for my attempt in the Church Assembly to initiate reform in the system of payment and deployment of the clergy, I fear that the juxtaposition of your well-wishing to Mr. Denniston's imperatives about disestablishment may cause a misunderstanding which will prove a hindrance rather than a help to the attainment of my object. I shall therefore be very grateful if you will allow me space in your columns to state that nothing which I am advocating is intended as a move towards disestablishment.

While I admit that I have often felt that disestablishment might be very good for the Church of England, I have never felt that it would be a good thing for England. Since, therefore, the primary purpose of the Church *in* England is the conversion *of* England, I still doubt very much whether it would be in accordance with the

guidance of the Holy Spirit that, as a step towards that missionary purpose, we should seek to destroy one of the remaining links we still have with the secular power and thus abandon an existing channel of influence.

Yours faithfully,

HUBERT E. MADGE.

Winchester.

CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP

Dear Editor,

It was indeed
Encouraging to see and read
November PRISM's final page,
With verses witty, shrewd and sage.
Their consequence should be to ban a
Gift of a casual Scrooge-like tanner;
Churchmen in country and in town
Will henceforth pledge at least a Crown.
In brief, "Te Deum! Praise the Lord!"

Yours gratefully,

THE CENTRAL BOARD.

W. H. Saumarez Smith,
Assistant Secretary,
The Central Board of Finance.

CHURCH AND PRESS

Dear Sir,

There is a well-known story of a youthful enthusiast in the French Revolution who had invented a new religion and asked Talleyrand how he might best propagate it.

"I should advise you", replied Talleyrand, "to die and rise again on the third day."

The Gospel committed to the Church can only be communicated by those who pay this cost: St. Paul expressed this truth by saying that we must bear about in our body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus may be manifested in us. The effectiveness of the Bishop-elect of Masasi (PRISM, October 1960, p. 13) is due to the costingness of his life.

This principle is summarised in the dogmatic statement: *The Word was made Flesh.* The revelation of God cannot be contained in a

Book: it is a Person. It cannot be conveyed in print or in spoken word or in drama or on television, except in so far as the human agent concerned is suffering in union with that Person.

Journalists, publicists and television producers are faced with a Gospel which explicitly and implicitly rejects their assumption as an adequate medium for its communication to others. Explicitly, for the Gospel is based on the recognition that God's ways are not our ways nor our thoughts His thoughts (Isaiah 55); implicitly, for God incarnate worked His redeeming acts in obscure and unsavoury settings, sent crowds away whenever they collected and rejected every suggestion of worldly or numerical success for himself and his followers.

The Church does not "need journalism" (Maurice Punnett) nor does it need to "consult the best available organisation" (John Murphy); still less does it need television through which to express itself to our age" (Michael Rossington). The general effect of the use of these media appears to be the diffusion of a vague familiarity with religion, without pressing the demand for crucified love. This is incalculably harmful, and hinders the communication of the Gospel by the only authentic means.

Yours faithfully,

J. D. Graham, C.R.

South Africa.

Dear Sir,

Our Anglican shop-window is admittedly somewhat untidy. But it would be mistaken to suggest, as Mr. Murphy does ("Can Publicity Help the Church?") that we do not really know what goods we are displaying. True, "the enormous variations of public theological message expressed in churches" give a superficial impression of vagueness: but anybody who takes the trouble can easily discover the unity underlying Anglican utterance, except perhaps those from the lunatic fringe.

The real problem is more subtle. It is not a question of getting the message right, but of getting the appeal right. We do not need to ask ourselves, what is the content of the Gospel but, what is the emotional complex (what psychologists call the "sentiment") to which it must be directed?

If we were commending the Gospel as a panacea for social and psychological ills, the answer would be simple. We would appeal directly to a (more or less enlightened) self-interest. A publicity

campaign based on this appeal might work wonders; but do we want to work that sort of wonder? Do we want to fill our churches with people who are trying to use religion as a means to personal well-being?

No, we are preaching the Cross, i.e. the reversal of this world's values. And this makes the problem of appeal enormously harder. Preaching the Gospel is not the same as promoting a good cause. The plight of refugees, for example, can be so presented as to appeal to our compassion: the call to missionary service, to our adventurousness and love of heroism. But there is nothing exactly analogous to these which the Gospel can use as its *point d'appui*. For the New Testament teaches us that we may indeed have peace and prosperity, health and happiness—but not by looking for them. We may indeed find all these things added unto us—but only if we seek first the Kingdom of Heaven and His righteousness. We can only get what we want by wanting something else more. As long as religion is *interested* it remains centred on self and therefore sub-Christian. Faith means self-abandonment to divine love—"not with the hope of gaining aught, nor seeking a reward". Would Mr. Murphy be prepared to accept a client whose aim was as paradoxical as this?

Yours faithfully,

ROBIN ANSTEY.

Chichester Theological College.

Dear Sir,

Many people engaged in religious television will be grateful for Mr. Redington's article in last month's issue. He is dismayed at a lethargic attitude towards religious television programmes on the part of the audience and the Church. He asks how the Church can find a place for itself alongside programmes that are popular and incisive.

A less "close up" look at the medium than he gives us in his article may provide a clue to understanding the dilemma facing us in religious television. We are dealing in a medium which has been grasped avidly by an immense audience as a means for its own self-expression. It is effective when it is working with the fundamental assumptions that the majority of people in Britain make about themselves, each other and their total environment. To design programmes aimed at challenging these assumptions is to work against the grain of the medium.

We are not always working against the grain. When we reflect the worship of the Christian traditions, we limit our audience, our intention is clear and, provided we do our job well, the response is generous.

But we have a further responsibility: to use the medium as it wants to be used in order, as Mr. Redington puts it, "to preach and teach the Gospel in a manner which is understandable and relevant to all men today". As I understand it, this task does involve a challenge to the basic assumptions of the audience—assumptions which lie below the level of consciousness and behind the springs of language. With this in mind, I would echo his cry for men with ideas, who can think in televisual terms; but I would add, men with theological understanding of and insight into the real situation within which we are working.

Of course, Christians will say "There is no easy answer" when questioned about their faith or standards of behaviour. There are no easy answers because the words and phrases available need redefinition if they are to speak the truth on the basis of a set of assumptions which is not shared by the speaker and his audience. On these grounds, I would judge that discussion programmes can only be of limited use to us.

We need programmes which so handle ideas that are familiar to the viewer as to make him aware of unresolved tensions within himself. This kind of brief sets us free to do more than arrange for the repetition of doctrinal jargon in television. I hope it may stir some of your readers to think about the work of religious television creatively.

Yours faithfully,

PETER HAMILTON.

Religious Broadcasting Department,
North Region.

EXPERIMENTAL LITURGY

Dear Sir,

Mr. Greenacre's letter is full of admirable suggestions, but without doubt the Interim Rite has for a good number of years satisfied a large number of people as an excellent compromise. Here we say the psalm for the preparation in the vestry, as the confession forms part of the liturgy later, and we have omitted the last Gospel.

Nearly everyone I have discussed this matter with does find that

the jumping up for a last Gospel breaks the peace following the Blessing, which should be a time for thanksgiving. But may one make a plea, without being too old-fashioned, that the Gloria in Excelsis be kept in the Prayer Book place. Here the Prayer Book offers an opportunity of a corporate thanksgiving to God for the mercies received in Holy Communion, and the putting of the Gloria earlier, (though some may consider it liturgically correct), would diminish the latter portion of the Eucharist.

Yours faithfully,

Leamington Spa. ANTHONY ROUSE.

Dear Sir,

Roger Greenacre's suggestion for a New Look Interim Rite is good: But—

1. How many priests would use it? Unless a substantial number do it will look too much like eccentricity and add to the prevailing confusion.
2. Would some respected though unofficial body adopt it? This will at leastgive it some status. The Church Union or the Religious Orders or both are my candidates.

I have two further thoughts to offer:

1. There is a great need for brevity and the avoidance of tautology. Could there not be revision by exclusion as well as by rearrangement (e.g. remove the Prayer of Humble Access entirely and confine the use of the Prayer for the Church (litanised) and the Prayer of Thanksgiving to Sundays only).
2. The Liturgical Commission has sat for seven years, produced one tentative report and one service (promptly quashed). Now the Chairman has resigned. No reason has been given.

What is going on? Peculiar rumours have circulated. . . .

Many of us believe that Prayer Book Revision is urgent and of first importance. Cannot a "Society for the Promotion of Liturgical Revision" be formed to urge it along and especially to convince the Canon Law fanatics in the convocations and Church Assembly that:

"Worship is the first concern of the Church" (Lambeth Conference Report, page 78).

Yours sincerely,

London, E.6. R. J. MACKLIN.

Prayer (2) Thanksgiving

Sister Edna Mary, c.s.a.

To turn to God when life is more than one can cope with is a recognition of dependence on him, and for many is the first step towards real communion with him. But it is very far from being the whole of that communion. Here again the analogy of human friendship is useful. It is a great thing to be able to turn to a friend for sympathy in times of trouble, but it would be a very unusual friendship which was limited to such occasions: normally the mark of friendship is the sharing also of joys, and of the ordinary pedestrian happenings of daily life. So it should be in friendship with God; and it is sobering to consider how readily many of us turn to him for sympathy or help in trouble, but never think of him when we are enjoying ourselves and things go well.

For most people there are times when the sharing of happiness with God could come easily. Skies are sunny and it feels good to be alive. For the Christian who has been trying to keep his will directed towards God in all the circumstances of life, it should be easy to turn this natural elation (which in itself has no religious significance) into thanks to the God who has made life so pleasant. Thus with little effort he can say a quick "Thank-you" when he encounters what is good, and thanksgiving will have its place naturally and without difficulty in his prayers at the end of the day. It is good when thanksgiving is thus a spontaneous reaction. But such times form only part of human life. For some people they are frequent and prolonged, for others rare and brief.

But for everyone there come times when it seems neither natural nor easy to thank God. For some there are times of great distress or misery, perhaps prolonged; for all there are times of petty irritations which can overshadow life as much as the great distresses, and times of depression (often due to physical causes) which take away all inclination to thank God for anything. Perhaps most insidious of all are the times when things are going well, life is happily busy, one day passes another with nothing to disturb the general contentment—and we live like healthy and well-fed cats, basking in the sun and taking the food that comes to us without overmuch thought of whence it comes. These are the times when we have to

shake ourselves out of our spiritual lethargy and remember that we have much for which we should thank God daily in our prayers.

The first and simplest, step to thanksgiving is deliberately to look back over the day and take account of the things and events for which we ought to thank God. There are always some, however hard life may seem: the very simplest things—food or other basic necessities, health of body or intellectual ability, friends or colleagues, the love or consideration which anyone shows us, beauty in nature or in human acts: things which we had taken for granted or had forgotten because we were so miserable. Particularly at times when life is difficult it is good to join with our thanksgiving for such simple things prayer for those who lack them—the multitudes of men and women and children who live on the edge of starvation, the homeless and the orphan and the friendless, those who suffer great pain or chronic illness, those who are treated as little more than animals. Thus our thanksgiving will be deepened, and will be linked with prayer for other people.

But for the Christian thanksgiving is something much more fundamental than this. Many centuries before Christ a Jew could see the land he loved ravaged by invaders, could share the horror of war and famine, and could still declare:

> Although the fig-tree shall not blossom
> And there be no fruit on the vine,
> The labour of the olive shall fail
> And the fields shall yield no meat,
> The flock shall be cut off from the fold
> And there be no herd in the stall—
> Yet I will rejoice in the Lord,
> I will joy in the God of my salvation.
>
> (*Hab.* 3.17-18)

For the Christian this confident joy is put upon an immeasurably surer basis because of the demonstration of the utter love of God in the Incarnation. For whatever the circumstances of his life, the Christian can rest with confidence in the complete trustworthiness of the Father who so loves his children that he gives them all that they need, even his Son—and it is this confidence which is the primary ground of thanksgiving.

But as he looks at Christ, the Christian can go further than this. We saw something last month of the assurance of God's sympathy which the Incarnation gives. But the sufferings of Christ are more

than his bond with humanity, they are inseparable from his glory. The centre of the Christian faith is a Messiah who still bears the marks of crucifixion (I Cor. 1.23), "Jesus, because of the sufferings of death, crowned with glory and honour" (Heb. 2.9-11). It is not *despite* his sufferings that Christ is glorified, but *because* of them, for the heart of his victory over evil was his refusal to let any of the suffering which it could inflict on him, or even death itself, impair his love or his obedience to the Father. And the exciting thing is that God allows Christians a share in that victory. Peter and John rejoice that "they were counted worthy to suffer for the Name"; Ignatius speaks with joy of his impending martyrdom as bearing a harvest for Christ; and Paul boasts "I will glory in my infirmities" and makes the stupendous claim "I make up in my body what is lacking of the suffering of Christ, for the sake of his body, which is the Church" (Cor. 1.24). Christ's body on earth is called to share in the sufferings which he knew in his human body; and by meeting them with the unconquerable love and obedience with which he met all the evil that was done to him, by refusing to be embittered and so increase the power of evil, the Christian shares in his Master's victory. Thus whatever suffering he has to face—pain or sickness of self or loved ones, loneliness or disappointment or frustration, the crash of plans and hopes, the misunderstanding or bitterness of those he loves, the spiritual anguish when it seems that God himself is far away—all this can, if he chooses, be a chance to share in the atoning work of Christ himself. It may be long before he can welcome it as such, but when he can begin to do so the suffering itself becomes something for which to thank God.

Thus thanksgiving, like all the Christian's prayer, is rooted in the consideration of God and his work, and above all of the Incarnation. From this consideration the Christian must turn, by deliberate act of will and regardless of his feelings at the time, to express the thanks that he owes. He can do so in a variety of ways—in his own words, like saying "thank you" to a friend; in words from the Bible or hymns, or from the writings of the saints. But, especially when thanksgiving does not come easily, one of the best ways is to use the General Thanksgiving, saying it slowly and deliberately, and *intending* to mean it, whatever he *feels* like. Here is a prayer that is balanced, comprehensive, and always true. Even if there are times when we cannot summon up much enthusiasm about "all the blessings of this life", blessings there are; and what is more important,

whatever happens, we have cause to thank God daily for "the redemption of the world in our Lord Jesus Christ, for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory". If a place is made regularly for thanks such as this in the time set apart for prayer, and the eyes are kept open to see God at his work of love in daily life, there will soon appear unsuspected occasions to thank him constantly throughout our days.

Christmas Cards

Christian Action have produced three cards this year: Mother and Child, designed by Dame Laura Knight. 9d. each. The Gifts of the Magi, designed by John Piper, 6d. each. Study of a Young African, designed by Hyman Segal, 6d. each.

The cards can be overprinted with names and addresses and prices are reduced for larger orders. There are also envelope seals at 6d. a sheet. They can all be ordered from Christian Action at 2 Amen Court, London, E.C.4.

Painted Postcards Ltd. the Mouth and Foot Painting Artists Publishing Company, have seven Christmas cards and a calendar all executed by artists who have lost the use of their hands. They cost 4s. 3d. for the calendar and 5s. 3d. for the seven cards, and they can be bought separately. Order from Painted Postcards Ltd., 9 Inverness Place, London, W.2.

PRISM PERSONALITY: 1

CHRISTOPHER MARTIN

Paul Ferris said recently that most Anglican clergy look ten years younger than they really are. This might apply to Anglican laymen too if Christopher is typical. But do not be deceived by the fresh and rosy complexion, or the growing gap between the waist-band of his trousers and the lower points of his waistcoat, or his fashionable, slightly unscrubbed appearance, for he has a high-powered mind ticking away, absorbing and rejecting, imbibing and dispersing, as well as a lively way of expressing himself and a thorough knowledge of British political institutions gained at Oxford.

He has many friends, male and female, and they tend to get together sometimes and say, "I wonder what we are going to do about Christopher?" For he has a charming skill of gliding imperceptibly out of one culture-conscious job and into another, and all the time he and we do not really seem to know what ultimately God wants him to do.

He is a devout Anglican and has had a spell teaching at a theological college, but at the moment is sure the priesthood is not for him. One of his well-wishers envisages a job in the City for him, a detached house at Chislehurst, a lot of children and of course a wife. But so far none of these things has happened.

In the meantime, the world of Anglican intelligentsia would be a poorer and less defined unit without him.

Attention all Students

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